Developing Online Community

The features have been listed in terms of their perceived ability to support the **DOMAIN**, **COMMUNITY** & **PRACTICE** in a community of practice. (Wenger, 2002)

DOMAIN

Supporting knowledge content building, and knowledge sharing		
Features		**Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds**
Asynchronous Discussion		
Synchronous Discussion		
Ability to post documents		
Tracks what a user has read and not read (tools to monitor activity)		
Ability to edit or delete or spell-check postings		
Ability to search through the whole site and through sub-sections of the site		
Supports threaded and linear messaging modes		
Ability to attach files		
Ability to link between messages		

Supporting resource development and archiving		
Features		**Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds**
Shared document development		
Publishing of resources		
Archiving function		
Content management utilities		

COMMUN ITY

Facilitating cooperation, collaborative and participation		
Features		**Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds**
Community directory		
Being able to see who is online with you (presence indicators)		
Instant messaging (being able to send messages which arrive on the recipient's active screen, and are notified by a flashing alert)		
Inline photos with each message		
Option to email yourself the discussion threads		
Areas where sub-groups of members can communicate		
Areas where all community members can communicate with each other		
Facility to send private messages		
Ability to create new discussions		
Ability to read conversation strings (multiple messages in one screen)		
Tracks what the user has read / not read (tools to monitor activity)		
Live chat		

Facilitating the sense of belonging to a learning community		
Features		**Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds**
Customisation		
Images of community members		
Biographical/personal information for each community member		
Polling, or programming flexible enough to add this		
Provide different levels of access in different parts of the site		

Facilitating the sense of ownership of the community

Features		Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds
Facility to create new discussions		
Facility for members to host certain areas of the site (devolving authority to community members)		
Ability to see when other members were last online		

Enabling the expression of online identity

Features		Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds
Inline photographs with each message		
Instant messaging (being able to send a message which arrive on the recipient's active screen and is notified by a flashing alert)		
Areas where all community members can communicate with each other		
Facility to discuss in private spaces and households		
Facility to send private messages		
Video streaming, video or audio conferencing		

Ease of use for the host/moderator

Features	WebCT	Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds
Ability to provide different levels of access to members		
Good host/moderator tools (ability to move posts, import and export material)		

PRACTICE

Ease of use for members		
Features		**Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds**
Good host/moderator tools (ability to move posts, import and export material)		
Some formatting capability in messages (e.g. bold, italics, fonts, character size, paragraphing)		
Calendar		
Notice board or Announcement		
Ability to work offline		

Enabling the sense of being immersed in discrete activity areas		
Features		**Comments, Suggestions & Workarounds**
Facility to set up discrete activity areas such as Domain, Practice, and Community, where users can maintain a particular focus		
Participant leadership or Facility to promote weaving of main ideas in otherwise divergent conversations		
Facility for members to host certain areas of the site (devolving authority to community members)		
Ability to see who is online at the same time as you (presence indicators)		
Areas where sub-groups of members can communicate		

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